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Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Identical letters dated 24 February 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing following the most recent horrific Palestinian terrorist attack perpetrated against the citizens of Israel.

Sunday, 22 February 2004, at approximately 8.30 a.m. (local time) a Palestinian terrorist carried out a grave homicide attack on a crowded commuter bus in central Jerusalem, killing eight people and wounding 73, six seriously. Many of the victims were young students on their way to school. The blast ripped through public bus No. 14 opposite Liberty Bell Park as it was making its way towards the city centre. The bomb was packed with metal and iron shards in order to effect maximum pain and injury on the victims. The force of the explosion, which rattled buildings along the thoroughfare, scattered body parts and wreckage throughout the area of the blast, creating a scene of despicable horror. The murdered were Ilan Avisidris, 41; Lior Azulai, 18; Netanel Havshush, 20; Yuval Ozana, 32; Yaffa Ben-Shimol, 57; Benayahu Yehonatan Zuckerman, 18 — all of Jerusalem — Rahamim Duga, 38, of Mevasseret Zion; and Yehuda Haim, 48, of Givat Ze'ev.

The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, of Yasser Arafat's own Fatah movement, claimed responsibility for the attack despite official condemnation of the attack by the Palestinian Authority. The bomber was identified as Mohammed Za'ul, 23, from the village of Hussan near Bethlehem. The terror cell responsible for yesterday's bombing reportedly also carried out the suicide attack on Jerusalem public bus No. 19 on 29 January, which killed 11 passengers. Jerusalem public bus No. 14 bus was previously targeted six months ago on 11 June 2003 when a Palestinian terrorist murdered 17 passengers in a homicide bombing.

It is grim and ironic that at the same time Israel must bury the eight victims of Sunday's bombing, the Palestinians are using the International Court of Justice to attack Israel for building a fence that could have saved the victims' lives. Palestinian

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terrorists succeeded in perpetrating both yesterday's attack and the previous attack in Jerusalem by infiltrating through an area where the security fence has not yet been completed. In areas currently protected by the security fence, the incidence of terrorist attacks has been significantly reduced.

Yesterday's attack demonstrates yet again the Palestinian leadership's morally bankrupt strategy of support for terrorist activities and depraved inaction in the face of rampant incitement and a mounting infrastructure of terrorism. The ongoing failure of the Palestinian Authority to fulfil its counter-terrorist obligations constitutes a brazen violation of the most basic obligations of international law, human rights, Security Council resolutions and the road map itself. In light of this interminable policy of complicity by the Palestinian Authority, Israel remains obligated to take the necessary defensive measures against the campaign of terrorism that was forced upon it.

Israel calls upon the international community to make clear to the Palestinian leadership and to those regimes sponsoring terrorism in the region its absolute rejection of terrorist tactics, and its acceptance of nothing less than the complete dismantling of terrorist organizations and relentless efforts to prevent terrorism and bring its perpetrators and supporters to justice, in accordance with international law, signed agreements between the parties and Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 1373. Only a united and uncompromising stand against the perpetrators of these crimes — in all international and domestic forums — can bring an end to the Palestinian strategy of terrorism and violence and make peace between the peoples of the region possible. Rewards for the continuing Palestinian policy of intransigence and terror, in the form of political concessions or the toleration of one-sided initiatives in the organs of the United Nations, can only embolden the terrorists and undermine efforts aimed at achieving a peaceful settlement.

I submit this letter in follow-up to numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism launched in September 2000, which document the crimes for which the terrorists and their supporters must be held fully accountable.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the fifty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 156 and 67, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Dan **Gillerman**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations